846 For any subsequent children, the feast will be reduced to the
851 presentation by the grandmother of a basket of food to "*tlangela*
603 *ñwana*," viz. to "celebrate the child."

III. *The Nursing Period.*

853 The little child has been taken out of the confinement hut (*humesha busahanen*). He is now allowed to go outside. The nursing period then begins and will last two and a half or three years; but before we study the rites which mark it, let us consider the manner in which the baby is carried and his diet during this period.

A South-African woman with her child in the ntehe.

1) The Ntehe.

854 A little child is not carried by his mother in her arms, but in a softened skin which is called *ntehe*. The preparation of the ntehe is subject to many prescribed customs.

The first of these is this: the ntehe must not be looked out before the birth of the child, or it would bring misfortune. This is a taboo which I might call a "taboo of prevision." Some other taboos of this kind are met with in our tribe.

[604] For a first-born child, the skin must be provided by the maternal uncle. This is a rule, but the custom is not tabooed (1). The father may also prepare it, if necessary.

825 The ntehe must not be a sheep skin.
854 That is taboo. Let them take the skin of a duiker (blue antelope), of a goat or of a mhala (impala). Sheep skins are

(1) Though the term taboo generally means a prohibition, I take the liberty of using it in a positive sense: A custom is taboo or is tabooed when its transgression is a taboo.

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

765 783 302

well as the obligation of using special spoons, refer only to the diggers and the widows.

Other rites must be performed by the whole community.

First the *cutting of the hair*, which must be complete for the widows and the near relations. Men sometimes cut only one strand on each side, women cut from the forehead to the nape of the neck. The operation is performed either by the doctor or by anybody who is familiar with it, and the instrument used is either an iron razor or a bit of glass. They say this shaving is an act of respect for the dead, also a sign of sadness and a means of preventing the *mayiha*, the impression of the hair standing on end from fear of death. Should mourners forget to cut their hair, they might lose their senses, and become delirious (hahama).

765 783 604

Then they put on *malopa*, viz, pieces of dark blue cotton cloth which have been used for a long time amongst the Ba-Ronga. The first widow must have them before she enters the enclosure of the second vapour bath.

A third general rite is the *luma milomo*, the purification of the food of the deceased. This is not a medicinal operation, but it seems that, by this act, every relative removes from himself the danger which is in the contaminated food. The word *luma*, which we shall often find in the Thonga ritual, means originally to bite (like a dog) or to cause violent, internal pain (colic or pains of labour). But in the ritual terminology it means to accomplish certain rites in relation to some given food in order to remove the danger which is attached to it. The *milomo* are seeds of each kind of cereal which the deceased had in his storehouses. Some beans, grains of maize, kaffir corn, kaffir peas, etc., are cooked and poured into one of the baskets (lihlelo) of the deceased. The *ntukulu*, viz. the uterine nephew, the son of the sister of the deceased, is first called. It is he who must begin the rite and this is so important that, when people go to pay their mourning visit, they always take with them a girl or a boy who is a " ntukulu " of the one they mourn. The child stands before the pot, his feet together. The master of the mourning, (in this case, the first widow) kneels before him, takes a few drops from the pot, and some of the cooked food which remains at the bottom, and pours

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

765 this between his great toes. He bends his body and rubs the
783 two great toes against one another. Then he turns his back to
604 the place and goes away. He must not look behind : it is taboo. Then the other relatives say : " Let us all go and *luma milomo*. " He has given them the right to do so.

765 A little of the *milomo* is carefully kept in a pot for months.
783 When relatives who were absent on the day of the death come back from Johannesburg or from elsewhere, they must perform this ceremony before entering the village and eating any food in it. " Ba yila muti " — " they are taboo to the village." The rule applies only to relatives. Other people may very well eat from the deceased's store of food without any harm, as its contamination is dangerous only to his family. Another variety of this rite consists in preparing light beer with the mealies of the dead and taking first one mouthful which must be spat out on the right side, then a second one on the left side, after which one is allowed to drink.

765 The *gardens* of the deceased must also be purified, and this is
783 done by the rite called *baninga mabele*, to give light to the mealies.
415 The widows and all the female relatives go to his fields holding an old and empty *shikutja*. The shikutja is the hard shell of a sala fruit, the size of an orange, in which has been kept the provision of vegetable *tihuhlu* fat (see Part IV) and which is still impregnated with it. The women set fire to it and walk through the gardens holding it up and illuminating the fields. This is perhaps in relation to the idea that death means darkness, and that its contamination is " black " (ntima) so long as the cleansing has not taken place.

765 During the five days of the Great Mourning, relatives and
574 friends come to pay the *official mourning visit* (1). They enter the village, the women shouting their lamentations (mikulungwana). Some one leads them to the grave and they walk round it uttering cries of mourning, taking leave of the deceased. At the burial of Sokis, I heard a woman saying with a trembling voice : " Good-bye! You have gone! Do not forget us. Remember Mulalen."

(1) This visit can be paid one, two, or three months later on, because, as they say, " nkosi a pai boli, " — " the mourning does not get rotten. " But it is only during the five days that dances take place.

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

765 782 604 little of it into a glass and raises it to the lips of the old man. "He cuts his prayer" and while all the attention of the public is concentrated upon this act (which belongs also to the ritual, as the priest must be the first to partake of the offering), the wives of the batukulu rush towards the shoulders, lungs and hoofs of the goats and the bottle of wine, seize them and run away towards the west. They have stolen the meat of the sacrifice! At once all stand up and follow them laughing, shouting and pelting them with the *psanyi*, which they had kept for this purpose. The thieves hide themselves behind some bush and eat the meat. Uterine nephews are representatives of the gods, as we shall see later on, and they assert their right by stealing the offering and eating it up.

This ceremony is highly characteristic as it embodies some of the principal ideas of the Thongas in the domain of religion, social life and taboo. It was worth while describing it, and we shall refer to it later on, when dealing with sacrifices and the position of the uterine nephews in the family.

765 292 554 825 The crushing down of the hut is not performed in exactly the same manner amongst the Ba-Ronga. In the clans *South of the Bay*, they only *close* it (pfala yindlu). They dig holes in front of the door, into which they insert poles of the bush called *nhleha*, tying thorny branches horizontally to them. The shield of the deceased is placed against the door. The religious rite then takes place and from the skins of the sacrificed goats strips are cut, which the widows will have to wear *en bandoulière* during the following months of their widowhood. The astragalus bones are kept and hung round the neck. The gall-bladder is also preserved and fixed in the hair of the new master of the village as a sign of his new position.

765 596 In the *district of Makaneta*, on the estuary of the Nkomati, the ceremony comprises two successive acts. First there is also a *provisory closing* of the hut, which can take place one month after the death and is accompanied by the family gathering and the religious ceremony. One year later, when the inheritance is adjudicated, the hut is crushed down, but only if it belonged to a headman of the village and if the kraal is obliged to move in

washed in the pool and which she will wear again for two days (1).

b) *The following days of the Great Mourning.* Without delay a new hut, a small provisional hut, is built in front of the mortuary one. Here the great wife will stay during the whole of her widowhood; the space between this and the old hut is more or less taboo and most of the possessions of the deceased are placed there, under the roof near the door on the outside. (See illustration p. 159.)

The other widows do not leave their huts, but they participate in the other purifying acts, the vapour baths and the general sprinkling of the fifth day. As regards the vapour baths, however, the first wife is associated with the grave-diggers, viz. she must be exposed to the strongest medicinal smoke, while the inferior wives are cleansed with weaker drugs. They all put on the *malopa* and eat with spoons during the whole year of widowhood.

c) *Provisional decision regarding the fate of the widows.* A few days after the Great Mourning, a fresh gathering takes place, not in connection with the defilement of death, which is now provisionally cleansed, but *to settle provisionally the fate of the widows.* The sisters of the deceased have to play a special part in this gathering. They will lead the discussion with the widows about their new husbands. It is indeed a happy custom to let women decide on the subject. Not that they have unrestricted power in the matter. The law has provided a certain rule for the distribution and this is seldom departed from. However, some liberty is allowed in its application, and modifications can better be made if proposed by female intermediaries. Should the husband possess a harem (tshengwe), that is at least five wives, they will most likely be given to the following heirs. The great wife, being "the pole of the

(1) *Widowers* also form a similar society and undergo the same rites; but just as it was only the great wife who was subject to these laws, to the exclusion of the little wives, so it is only when he has lost his first wife that a man is initiated into the widowers' society. After having buried her (he holds her head) he goes to the pool, washes himself, and another widower comes and makes the incision in him in the inguinal region. Then he throws aways his *shifado* (Annotatio 1.) and also carries out the same crossing of the hut in tears. These three acts constitute the actual widower's mourning; the vapour baths and *tahla khombo* are part of his purification as being the principal grave-digger.

1[See category 116 --Analyst]

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

787 village," must remain in it and belongs to the younger brother (1) 595 who becomes the master of the kraal. The second goes to the 428 second brother, the third to the third, the fourth to the *ntukulu*, 768 viz. to the son of the sister of the deceased. The fifth will then become the wife of one of the sons of the deceased. This may 604 appear shocking, and is really shocking even to the ideas of the Natives ; but let it be remembered that she is the youngest of all ; she was taken when the father was already old, and the first son is perhaps older than she. As regards the elder wives, the first and second especially, no one would think of keeping them for the son! Incestuous relations are very rare amongst the [835] Ba-Ronga. Even in this case, the feelings of both parties are more or less respected. The men advise the son to begin to play with the young widow, to ask her jocularly for tobacco, and he gradually accustoms himself to consider her no longer as a mother (mamana) but as a wife (nsati).

587 Of course the general rule is apt to be very much altered 595 according to circumstances. Should the deceased be the youngest 428 of the family, his elder brother may inherit the first wife. But 768 this is not the regular procedure.

The distribution having thus been decided on, the sisters of the deceased call the widows and say to them : "You so and so, you shall give food to so and so (phamela manyana)." But then the struggle begins. One of the widows, being old, may altogether refuse to have anything to do with any of her brothers-in-law. She may say : "I am taking my young son as a husband" which means : I do not want to be the wife of anybody. Or she will say : "I choose the big tree of the village where my late husband has built his hut." This answer may mean two things. Either : I do not leave this kraal and I will stay here without a husband ; or, on the contrary : I consent to be the wife of the man who becomes the headman of the village, viz. the eldest of the younger brothers. Another will say : "I love my *ntukulu* so and so." Should, however, the first wife desire to go to a man who does not

(1) Amongst the Ba-Ronga, an elder brother of the deceased cannot inherit a widow. It is taboo. He is a father to her, not a husband. He sometimes takes the lead in the discussion, having no personal interest in the matter. (See Part II).

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

768 left by a man. When they have been distributed, the minor
428 possessions of the deceased are adjudicated. As regards *oxen*,
604 *money*, these have been already remitted to the younger brother or, in his absence, to the sons. The younger brother will use them as family property to buy a wife for his son or for the son of the deceased, when he comes of age. In the distribution of the implements which have been cleansed, but left lying on the ground in front of the hut up to this day, the *ntukulu*, viz. the principal uterine nephew again plays an important part. He has the right of *tjhumba*, viz. of picking out for himself one of the assagais of his uncle, just as the maternal uncle takes (tjhumba) one pound from the lobola money (See Part II). Every warrior possesses at least two assagais ; the big one belongs in principle to the chief, and must be inherited by the eldest son. The nephew takes the smaller one, but he must precede his cousin in choosing ; in appropriating this weapon, he *surrenders* or transmits (nyiketa) the inheritance to the true heirs. This is a very characteristic expression. It seems as if he wished to assert his right ; but he takes the less valuable weapon and leaves the better one to the son. The explanation of this custom is probably to be found in the evolution of the family system which must have taken place amongst the Thongas (See Part II). In fact all the *batukulu* stand in a line and receive a portion of the property of the deceased, a knife, an axe, a small punch, etc. Women never inherit (a ba di
562 pfindla). When no heir exists except females, they may receive
428 something, but the valuable property must be kept by them for their sons, the uterine nephews of the deceased. Why ? Because, in the mind of the Thongas, a woman is not capable of possessing ; she is not able to build an oxen kraal and repair it ; how could she possess oxen ? The only thing she can do is to arrange a pig's kraal. Therefore she can own pigs, but nothing else!

768 The end of the feast of the adjudication of the inheritance is the distribution of the flesh of the victims. The company breaks up, each party having received one of the limbs. They must eat it on their way home, somewhere under a tree, on the road : neither in the mortuary village, nor in their own kraal. It is

764 inhabitants of the kraal. One of them, the saluter (mulosi), goes
604 to meet them and offers them a shilling. They keep silence.
[illegible] He tells them the news of the village. They do not answer.
578 He leaves them and comes a second time with a fresh present.
754 Then they consent to tell the news of their home, but they do not enter the village. The same man returns to them a third time with £ 1 ; they refuse to accept it. He adds 10/. (£ 1.10 is considered the normal sum to be paid as a kind of fine by the widower to the parents of the deceased.) They refuse again : this is an insult! Happily the *ntukulu* is there ; he will act as mediator between the two families. The visitors summoned him on their arrival and he has been sitting with them the whole time ; is he not the son of their sister ? But before he went to them, his father has given him his instructions : "Tell them that I have not eaten your mother." The *ntukulu*, as we shall see, is very free with his maternal uncles. He has the right of teasing them, even insulting them. Seeing that they do not accept the money, he stands and gives vent to his grief, throws sand at them, tries to drive them away, weeps. "No! Father has not killed mother! He is not a wizard! She died a natural death!" They see his tears, and then consent to enter the village.

764 In front of the mortuary hut, all the belongings of the deceased
768 wife have been piled up, together with the straw crown of the hut :
595 her pots, plates, baskets, spoons, mortars, etc. The brothers
782 break everything. Should there be any new implements amongst
[578] them, they will perhaps give them to their nieces. Then they lift up the roof of the hut and throw it into the bush. They pick all the plaster from the walls and throw it away where they threw the roof. The sacrifice is then accomplished amidst the ruins of the destroyed hut. Whilst it is being prepared, the women of both families insult each other. The female relatives of the deceased say to the women of the village : "You have killed her because she was a splinter in your eyes" (shilabi). The others answer : "Have you seen us kill her ? Perhaps people do not die with you ?" The *bukwele*, the special jealousy which almost always exists between co-wives, explains how it is possible for them to address such amenities to each other. But the victim is

601 611 tatana wa kokwana, father of grandfather, is never employed. The great-grandfather and the great-great-grandfather are sometimes designated as follows : he who does not see his grandson when he has been sent by the women to bring him food : the boy eats it on the way and the old man does not notice it! (Page 132). These progenitors call Tobane *ntukulu*, grandson. He is the true ntukulu of Shitsimbo ; to Tobane I, he is the *ntukulu wa shikandjatjolo*, "the one who sits on the knees ;" to Nkwangwana, the *ntukulu wo shikandjamirombo*, a word which seems to mean "the one who sits on the toes." In Djonga there is one more of these curious expressions applied to batukulu, *ntukulu wa shinguhe*. "When he pronounces that name," says Gana, "my great-grandfather points near by ; when he says *ntukulu wa shikandjatjolo*, he points further down." To understand this properly, we must imagine the following patriarchal scene : a very, very old man is sitting on the ground, holding his son (ñwana) in his arms, and with his grandson (ntukulu) on his thigh, his great-grandson (wa shikandjatjolo) on his knees and his great-great-grandson on his toes (1). The fact that these terms have become almost obsolete shows that the system of counting descent from the father is at any rate very old in our tribe. There must even have been a time when the ancestors in the paternal line were better known than now. The wives of these bakokwana are also bakokwana, in the same way as their husbands.

601 604 The father's sister is *rarana* (Ro.) *hahane* (Dj.). The two words are the same, as *r* often changes into *h* in Thonga phonetics ; the prefix of the first class, *mu* or *n*, now dropped, may have caused this change. Rarana approaches very closely to rara, father. It is employed in this form when it means *my* aunt. When we wish to say your aunt, his aunt, rarana becomes rarakati wa ku, rarakati

601 888 (1) There is another interpretation of these terms as applied to the grandparents : *kokwana wa shinguhe* : he is poor, miserable ! When an ox is killed in the village, they do not even send him his share ; he is far away. *Kokwana wa shikandjatjolo* : he is almost blind. When he wants to see his great-grandson he calls him and tells him : "Sit down on my knees." *Kokwana wa shikandja-mirombo* : mirombo or mitjombo means the small ears of mealies used to prepare the beer of the offerings. This kokwana, the great-great-grandfather, is already almost like one of the ancestor-gods to whom sacrifices are made !

601 604 wa kwe. This word means exactly female father. (See the meaning of this suffix *ati*, page 36, foot note.) Tumbane is rarana of Masusule. Masusule, to her, is also ñwana. He shows her great respect. However, she is in no way a mother (mamana). Yet, amongst the paternal relatives, she is the one to whom a boy or a girl will tell their secrets; her nephew or niece will go to her in order to get advice and help in their difficulties. Occasionally she will intercede for them with their father and her influence may be decisive. The rarana may be called on to officiate in a sacrifice offered on behalf of her nephews, the children of her brothers, if the latter are all dead.

Any female who is a near relation of my father or of my paternal ancestors, is also by extension a rarana: the daughters of my paternal grand-uncle, for instance, who are like sisters to my father, etc.

The husband of my paternal aunt is neither a father nor an uncle, but a *mukoñwana* or *namu*, brother-in-law, because, as we shall see, he has a kind of prior right to marry my sister (1). (Shinkanyana versus Masusule, Gen.A; or Muki versus Muhambi, Gen. B.). To Madonge, Muki is *nkata*, husband, on account of this possibility. He is a potential husband for her. Consequently Madonge is a potential co-wife of her paternal aunt, a co-wife of a particular kind, and the term used to indicate that relation is *nhlampsa*. We shall explain this term more fully by and by.

601 Tobane II calls Tumbane *makwabu*; this term, which is

(1) Though the husband of the paternal aunt is a mukoñwana, a term which implies respect, the respect shown to him is not great. Gana says: "When he passes through our village, I shall say to him: Good morning, namu! We tell each other freely the news of the day (djungulisana). He eats with us. We buy for him a little rice, a fowl. If I go to his village, I open the door of his hut and put my stick inside without asking permission... a thing which I would never do in the village of my wife's parents, who are my true bakoñwana. I sit down and say to him: 'Give me this or that..., for instance your hat.' He may refuse, but if he possesses two hats of the same shape, I insist and say: 'Give me one! We shall be like each other.' Thus we make fun together, we jest together (mpfhabelana)." — Would the uterine nephew behave in the same way towards his maternal uncle? — Not at all! The behaviour of the uterine nephew is called nyenyela. He shows no restraint at all; he comes and catches a fowl, a goat; he steals a pot of beer. When they see him coming, they say: "Here is the wizard, etc." (See later on, p. 232).

There is a special term in the Northern clans to indicate the relationship of two men who have married two sisters born of the same mother. They are called : bamakwabu ba shinauma, an expression which is the simplification of the following sentence : shi na wuñwe mamana, i. e. there is only one mother. This term seems to have been borrowed from the Pedis.

601 177

2) Relatives on the mother's side.

601 593 Tobane II calls Mishikombo *mamana*, mother. She is his true mamana and this relation is very deep and tender, combining respect and love. Love however generally exceeds respect. The proper word for tenderness is *timpsalu*, which comes from *psala*, to beget, and the mother is often called *mpsele* (a term which is applied also to the female of all animals). It is the word which answers best to the feelings of a mother for her children. She is generally weak with them and is often accused by the father of spoiling them.

601 664 The mother's sisters are *bamamana* in the second degree, because, if the true mother dies, one of them will probably take care of the children. Their husbands are *batatana* : Phayindi is tatana to Madonge and Muhambi. He calls them *bana*, children. Mboza is also a tatana to Mahlobo and Mathamba, being a makwabu, brother of their father, owing to the fact that he and Phayindi have married sisters.

601 578 595 All the co-wives are also *bamamana*, mothers by polygamy, (Nwashihoni and Mishihari to Tobane). They are *bamamana ba shitshengwe*, harem mothers. I respect them but they are further from me than my mother's sisters. A more familiar term for mother, corresponding to roro, father, is *ñwa*, a word always used with the possessive pronoun and only in the second and third person : ñwaku, your mother, ñwakwe, his mother. Ñwaku is employed in certain insults and oaths, and is to be avoided as being vituperative.

601 Many other women are mamana : the wife of my paternal uncle (Magugu for Muhambi), though I can inherit her in certain cases ; the daughter of my maternal uncle, because she is the

602 393 their bakokwana are of a much freer, more agreeable and kindlier nature than those with their father's relatives.

Amongst the Thongas of the North the maternal grandfather and the maternal uncles are called indiscriminately kokwana. The Ronga dialect makes a distinction between kokwana, maternal grandfather, and malume, mother's brother; but the malume is often 601 called kokwana. In the Northern clans the *uterine nephews*, viz. the sons of my sister, are always called *ntukulu*, which is the term corresponding to kokwana, as we have seen; amongst the Ba-Ronga, they bear a special name, *mupsyana*, which seems to be becoming obsolete, being often replaced by ntukulu (1).

Let us consider these various relatives on the mother's side. 603 The maternal grandfather is the great, the true kokwana. He is respected for his age. He is however more lenient to his grandson by his daughter than to his grandson by his son. If the first damages anything, he will say: "That is no business of mine. Let the father of the child scold him, as he does harm to his property. I have nothing to do with their affairs. It is not my village." But if it were his grandson by his son, it would be a totally different matter, and he would be hard on him. However, should a child take too great a liberty with his kokwana, the old man will say to him: "Go and play with your malume." 604 The malume, indeed, for his uterine nephew, is quite different from any other relative. No respect at all is necessary towards him! "You go to *bombela* in his village; you do what you please. You take all the food you want without asking permission. If you are ill, he will take special care of you and will sacrifice for you" (Viguet). In the Ronga dialect this bombela is called *nyenyela*. When the mupsyana goes to his maternal uncle, accompanied by his comrades who scent a good meal, the wives of the malume call to him: "Come along, husband (nkata)! Look here, your malume has hidden some food in the back part of the hut (mfungwe), behind the large basket (ngula). Go and take it." The boy steals the food, runs away with it and eats it up to the last morsel

(1) This is one of many proofs that the Ronga clans have preserved some old customs better than their Northern compatriots. Their language also possesses certain archaic features which are wanting in the Northern dialects.

604 with his friends. The malume comes back and is angry. But when he hears that the trick has been played by his mupsyana, he shrugs his shoulders and says : "Oh it is all right if it is the ntukulu who has done it ! A shi biwi ntukulu! The nephew must never be beaten!" When another day the nephew comes again, the malume says : "You starved us to death the other day!" — "Is there any more food handy that I may do it again ?" answers the boy. The sons of the malume seem to have
605 less patience with their cousin than their father has. When the cousin goes definitely beyond the limits of their endurance, they will chase him out of the village saying : "Go away, you dog!" The niece is sometimes as troublesome as the nephew. If she is married and pays a visit to her malume with her husband, she will leave the latter comfortably settled in the malume's hut and search the whole village to discover pots of beer, which she will bring to him as if she were the mistress of the home. She may even catch a fowl and give it to him.

604 Sometimes the malume himself points to one of his wives and
837 says to the ntukulu : "This is your wife. Let her feast you
587 well!" The woman much enjoys the situation, which she finds quite entertaining. She makes a feast for the ntukulu and calls him *nkata*, husband. It will sometimes go so far that the nephew will say to the uncle : "Please make haste and die that I may have your wife!" — "Do you intend to kill me with a gun ?" says the malume... But all this talking is a mere joke. The nephew can take many liberties with this aunt, especially in the Ronga clans. He will never however have relations with her during the life of her husband. Should he do so, he will have to pay the high fine due for a true adultery. Possibly he will inherit her when the malume dies, but she will not be his full property : she will only be given (nyika) to him, and the children will eventually belong to the malume's male relatives. All over the tribe this right of inheriting a malume's wife is recognized. In the Northern clans she is called *kokwana* ; in Ronga territory she is called kokwana by her nieces only, but her nephews call her *nsati* (wife), and this term seems also to be an old feature of the relationship system. This relation of malume and mupsyana is so important

604 that I intend to treat it more fully later on in a special paragraph, when considering the traces of older forms of family life amongst the Thongas.

601 The true malume is the mother's full brother. But all her half brothers are also bamalume in the second degree ; so are also the brothers of the true malume.

605 What about the *children of the malume*, my cousins, or rather my
835 cross-cousins, sons and daughters of my mother's brothers, viz.
582 Shaputa and Marangen as opposed to Madonge and Misaben ? In Zulu, Sutho, Pedi there is a special term to indicate this relation, (mzala, motsoala, mudzwala, muzwala). And the main feature of the family system in those tribes is that a cousin has a prior right to marry the daughter of his maternal uncle, his mzala. Amongst the Thongas there is nothing of the kind. The special term does not exist except in the Maputju clan, at the Southern extremity of Thonga territory, where it is met with in the form of *ntale* (corresponding to mzala, according to the law of phonetic permutation) (1) or *shitale* (when preceded by the prefix shi).
605 But the right of marrying this cousin is not recognized in the
835 Thonga tribe. One can play with her, steal some object from
582 her in fun, but never take her as a wife. Such a breach of the
602 custom would be punished by the chief. Later on, when the special relation of cross-cousins has been more or less forgotten, marriage could take place between them, but, at any rate, the ceremony of dlaya shilongo (see p. 256) would be performed, in order to "kill" the previous relationship and to replace it by the new relation of husband and wife.

This being so, how do cross-cousins behave towards each other in the Thonga system ? As regards the daughter of their maternal uncle, the relationship is somewhat different for Misaben, a boy, and for Madonge, a girl. To Misaben the boy, Shaputa, his cousin, is mamana and she will call him son, ñwana, because, as we have seen, Shaputa is a potential wife for Mboza, father of Misaben, and Mboza calls her nkata, nsati, namu. To Madonge,

605 (1) They also employ the cognate form *muzali*, which is more akin to the Zulu regular term, and this tends to show that the Maputjus have borrowed this expression from their Zulu neighbours of Northern Amatongaland.

III. *Matriarchy.*

178 602 But as regards *mother-right* and the *uterine family*, I must confess that I have altered my views since writing Les Ba-Ronga, and would testify my gratitude to Mr. S. Hartland, who encouraged me to study this subject more attentively. I had not then gathered all the facts, and the identity of the *ntukulu* and the *mupsyana* only became clearly apparent to me when studying the Northern clans. Now, having inquired with special care into this most curious feature of the Thonga system, I have come to the conclusion that the most probable explanation is that, in former and very remote times, our tribe passed through the matriarchal stage. Let us carefully consider the relation of a malume with his uterine nephews, recapitulating all the facts.

1) Duties and rights of the maternal uncle.

604 341 As we have seen, the uterine nephew all through his career is the object of special care on the part of his uncle : if he is a first-born child, the malume prepares his ntehe. (See page 46.) When weaned, he goes to stay in the village of his mother's relatives for many years, a girl sometimes till she is grown up. 604 583 Later on, when she marries, the maternal uncle claims a right called *tjhumba*, £ 1, on the total amount of the lobolo. It is taboo to refuse it ; should a father dare to keep that £ 1, his brothers will say to him : "Do you not fear the gods ? The mother's gods will kill you! Your daughter will have no children. Did you alone bring her into the world ? Did not these people help you in bringing her forth ? And has not your wife grown with the assistance of those gods ? Her brother must be allowed to have his *tjhumba*" (Mboza).

585 604 On the day of the remittance of the lobolo, the maternal uncle and all the mother's relatives are invited to the feast, and for them a special part of the festal ox is reserved, called *nyimba*, viz. the

604 womb, the uterus ; this consists not only of that organ, but of the
585 whole belly, from the sternum to the hind legs ; the bride's mother eats the *mbaca* and *khondjo*, viz. the extremity of the spine (Mboza).

585 On the day of hlomisa, when the bride is led to her husband's
431 village, her maternal relatives receive a special gift, a young cow called *mubya wa mana wa yena*, i. e. the skin in which her mother carried her on her shoulders when she was a baby. This cow will be sent to the family when the first and the third daughter marry. In the case of a second and fourth girl, the nyimba alone is sent.

585 In the *equipment of the bride*, the mother's relatives provide
604 her with a hoe, with fat to anoint her body, with a mat and clothing and sometimes with bracelets. The paternal aunt (hahana) does not give anything, neither does the paternal uncle, the latter only helping the father occasionally. Should the mother's relatives not fulfil this duty of providing part of the trousseau, next time they will not be given the *nyimba* to which they were entitled (Viguet).

593 But the most characteristic prerogative of the bamalume or
602 bakokwana, is *their special right of intercession* on behalf of the
604 uterine nephews. In fact, as Mankhelu said in his picturesque language, "as regards sacrifices (timhamba), the mother's relatives mostly perform them. They are the stem. My father is the stem as regards the oxen, but my mother is the true stem ; she is the god ; she makes me grow. Should she die when I am an infant, I shall not live. The village of my mother is as the home of the gods (ka mamana hi ko psikwembyen)." Simeon Gana added : "We have the special charge of sacrificing for our batukulu ; our sons also are priests to them, and can officiate in our place, even should they be younger than our batukulu. That is the reason why we do not marry them. We are their elders (bakulu)." Of course the bones will always be consulted and they will tell if a sacrifice must be offered to the gods of the mother or to those of the father, but a kokwane will preferably be called upon to sacrifice for a sick child. (See Part VI. Chap. II, II.)

604 In the ceremonies following death, especially in the feast of
611 the mourning beer (page 164), the malume will be the officiating person and squeeze the *psanyi* over his batukulu to cleanse them.

A last right possessed by the malume is that *of raising his village*

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

604 611 597 *(pfusha mati) by means of a ntukulu.* Should he see that he has no children, that his village is in danger of "dying," he will take his unmarried sister to his village and refuse to accept the lobolo for her. He will say to her : "Do not fear! If you die, I will bury you!" This duty falls in the first place to the husband; but the brother is ready to fulfil it. She will have lovers, and perhaps give birth to a son. As she has not been lobola, this child belongs to the mother's family, according to the great rule of Native law. The uncle will appropriate this male offspring of his family, who will bear the *shibongo* of his kokwana. A uterine nephew, adopted under these circumstances, can save the family of his mother from extinction.

2) Rights of the uterine nephew.

604 782 The attitude of the ntukulu wa shisati (the uterine nephew) to his malume is quite peculiar. "Ntukulu i hosi, a nyenyela hikwapsu ku malume." — "The uterine nephew is a chief! He takes any liberty he likes with his maternal uncle" (Mboza). These prerogatives of uterine nephews with regard to relatives on their mother's side, their bamalume and bakokwana, appear clearly in the religious ceremonies. We have seen the prominent part which batukulu take in these rites. "Ba yima mahlwen ka psikwembu" — "they stand before the gods, in their stead" (Viguet). They must be the servants of the altar, and the consumers of the offering. In the great sacrifice for rain, as accomplished in the Northern clans, an offering of beer is made, together with the sacrifice of the black victim. (See Part VI.) It is the uterine niece of the chief who must fetch the mealies from the granary, pour them into the pot, take the first handful to crush it in the mortar, give the first blow with the pestle, and begin each of the complicated acts of the brewing. When the black victim is brought, some one puts an assagay into her hand and helps her to stab the animal. She it is who "gives over to the gods" (nyiketa psikwembu). The same thing happens in the great family gatherings : one ntukulu holds the leg, another the

604 782 assagay. The batukulu dispose of the portion of the limbs offered to the gods. They *cut* the prayer and, at that moment they steal the meat or the beer of the sacrifice and run away with them. Why is this? "Because a ntukulu does not fear the saliva of his malume" (Mboza). They live in such intimacy with them that they can eat that which was reserved for the gods (1) (See p. 162).

604 The ntukulu *also takes precedence* in some other rites; in the circumcision school the uterine nephew of the chief is at the head of the circumcised. In the *luma milomo* (page 146) he starts the purifying ceremony, and "gives to the others" (nyiketa) the use of the food of the deceased.

604 428 178 But it is especially in the question of the inheritance that he shows himself in his characteristic aspect. Father-right has set in and is strongly supported by the lobola custom. Therefore the sons of the deceased have the sole right to the property of their father, wives as well as implements. The batukulu, however, the uterine nephews, refuse to be left out! You will find them everywhere, trying to get something for themselves. They were already planning with the malume's wives to take them as spouses after the death of their husband. Remember how they teased the whole family, on the day of the distribution of the widows (page 208). When the implements were distributed, they came and claimed their *tjhumba* (a technical expression, it would seem, which means precisely this kind of claim lodged by a malume or a ntukulu). They were given the small assagay, the big one remaining for the son. In this way *ba nyiketa pfindla, they give over the inheritance to the legal heirs.* This is a most vivid representation of a right which no longer exists, having in fact become

769 602 (1) Some ethnographers have supposed that ancestral worship only began when the father took command of the family and consequently did not exist in the period of mother-right. This seems to me absolutely false. The spirits of the mother's family are invoked as well as the father's ancestors, and the special place of the uterine nephews in worship down to this day is best explained in this way: before the gods of the father were known and prayed to, those of the mother were worshipped, and consequently the batukulu held a special position in the ritual. When the ancestors on the father's side made their appearance in the Bantu Pantheon, beside those on the mother's side, or after the institution of father right, the batukulu preserved that special position.

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

obsolete, but which asserts itself in virtue of the survival of an old custom. I have often been struck by the unconscious way in which they act on all these occasions! They give the impression of people who have been hypnotised and ordered to do something next day, when no longer in the mesmeric sleep. You see them carrying out the act, constrained by a mysterious necessity and without knowing why they do so. The hypnotising factor here is the weight of heredity, of all this hoary antiquity, which belongs indeed to the past, but still influences the subliminal life of the tribe...

As regards the chiefs, I may add that the uterine nephew may be given the chieftainship over a certain part of the country. He is well received at the Court, better than the nephews on the brother's side, because, with these, there is always the risk that they may become usurpers. This also explains why a chief, when in danger, will ask help from his bakokwana rather than from the relatives of his own family. The latter may seize the opportunity for "bangana buhosi", i. e. to dispute the chieftainship with him.

Mother-right most probably existed amongst the ancestors of the Thongas, whatever may be the country in which they then lived and the name by which they were called. But everything seems to prove that this phase has long ago passed away. No one remembers anything of the kind. Genealogies, which are the oldest records of the tribe, mention only the ancestors of the father. They are recalled much better than those of the mother. The lobola custom, which is the strongest support of the paternal right at the present time, has been practised since time immemorial (1). See also the special names of the great-grandfathers in the paternal line (p. 227).

(1) Lobola is however not incompatible with the uterine form of the family. I have been informed by the Rev. E. Allégret, working in the French Congo, that the Mpongwe and Galoa of the Lower Ogowe have still partly preserved the mother-right. But lobola exists. The first lobolo is payed indifferently to the father or the mother of the bride, and the choice is made according to the personal relations existing between the husband's family and the families of the bride's parents. When a second daughter marries, half the lobolo is given to the maternal uncle. The children stay in the father's village, but they are under the guidance of the mother and of her family. They belong to the mother's clan. This system evidently denotes a less advanced stage of evolution. However matriarchy is passing into patriarchy, and the lobola custom will probably hasten the process.

114 In a paper published in the *South African Journal of Science*, 1925, under the title "The Mother's Brother in South Africa," Professor R. Brown deals at length with the facts related above and strongly opposes the matriarchy hypothesis. In his opinion the peculiar relation of a nephew with his maternal uncle is the result of the natural tenderness and indulgence which characterises the relation of a mother and her child. The feelings of the child towards its mother are extended to all the relatives of the mother, and a certain pattern of behaviour is thus created, the behaviour of a ntukulu towards all his bakokwana.

I cannot here enter upon a full discussion of Mr. Brown's theory, but I must confess that it does not seem to me entirely satisfactory. I will mention only three reasons why I find myself unable to accept it :

1) If the peculiar relation existing between a child and his bakokwana really originated from the feelings of that child towards his mother, feelings which are extended to all her relatives, why should the *paternal* grandfather and grandmother be classified amongst the bakokwana as well as the maternal relatives ? (See p. 227, 235.)

604 2) There is a term which Mr. Brown's theory does not explain, the word *nyiketa*, which is the technical expression used by the Thongas to describe the part played by the uterine nephew in the ceremonies connected with the adjudication of the inheritance. My distinguished opponent, summing up what I wrote on the subject, says: "The nephew claims some of the property of his mother's brother when the latter dies, and may sometimes claim one of the widows." There is much more than that in the Thonga custom. The nephew *nyiketa* the inheritance to the sons of his mother's brother, who are the actual legal heirs. Nyiketa comes from nyika, to give. It is a derivative which reinforces the meaning of the simple form nyika, and may be translated by the English word *surrender* or *transmit*. What does it mean in this connection ? It means that, consciously or unconnsciously, the nephew considers himself as the legitimate heir ; but on account of a change which has taken place in the laws of the tribe, as the recognised heirs are now the sons, he gives up his right and transmits it to the sons. The fact that he does so is best explained by the supposition that he possessed that right in a previous phase of family relations. I do not see how this "nyiketa" could be accounted for if these customs were dictated only by the natural feelings of a child towards his mother, feelings which had been extended to the mother's brother.

3) In the Rev. Ed. W. Smith's book on the Ba-Ila speaking people (Vol. I, p. 317) we see that amongst the Ba-Ila the mother's brother "is

604 very highly respected, that he has the right of life and death over his nephews." The relation between a maternal uncle and his nephews is totally different in that Central African tribe from what it is amongst our South African tribes. There, at any rate, the pattern of behaviour inspired by the mother does not apply to her brother, and Mr. Brown's theory is at fault. On the matriarchy hypothesis, on the contrary, it is not impossible to explain this fact. There has been an evolution (whilst there has probably been no change in the feelings of a mother towards her child from the beginning of the human race up to the present day). If, in the course of this evolution, there was a time when the family system was matrilocal, a time when a child dwelt in its mother's village, close to its mother's brother, one can understand that the latter, at that time, took upon himself the duty of educating the child, of reproving him. His attitude, in such circumstances, was more severe, more dominating than now. As the Ba-Ila have preserved a kind of matriarchy, possessing, as they do, totemic clans in which matriarchal customs prevail, we ought not to be astonished if the relations of uncle and nephew are so different amongst them. In the South African tribes the authority has completely passed to the father. Hence the great respect shown to him by the children; hence also the want of respect and the great ease in the relations with the maternal uncle.

603 At the end of this argument, may I allow a Native to give his opinion?
611 Natives often refuse if asked to explain these mysterious customs of theirs. Yet when we have the chance of hearing an intelligent Bantu formulate a reason for one of them, we are bound to consider such testimony as very valuable. Natives feel what we, Europeans, can only guess, and they have actual experience of the Bantu kraal life... Speaking on this very subject of the mode of behaviour of a Thonga toward his father's and mother's family my informant said: "If the paternal grandfather is less lenient with his grandson than the maternal grandfather, it is on account of property" (p. 232). The paternal grandfather and his grandson belong to the same clan, or sib, or family. They bear the same name (shibongo). They possess in common certain property, oxen, implements, etc, which all of them have the duty of preserving, increasing, defending. If a child spoils or destroys this property, he commits a wrong which is resented by all the other members of the clan. His paternal grandfather will reprove him. He will do so also if the honour, the good reputation of the clan is at stake. But the maternal grandfather has nothing to do with such matters. The spoiled property

643 604 778 "when the Ba-Khosa had emerged from the reed" (See Vol. II, Part VI, III). Nobody might see it except the chief, who kept it hidden somewhere in a hole amongst the rocks. His uterine nephew alone (ntukulu) knew the place, and when it was necessary to use it in order to pray to the deceased chiefs, the chief and his nephew alone were permitted to approach the hiding place ; those 643 who accompanied them had to stop at a distance. This mhamba 778 is lost. Even the chief Ntshongi, who was the paramount chief of 789 the Ba-Khosa at the beginning of this century, had never seen it. It had been taken by his predecessor Mavabaze and had disappeared during the political troubles of the Gungunyana's war. Thus it is impossible to say of what it consisted, and this will probably never be known. There is no doubt however, that it was used for the same purpose as the mhamba of the Tembe and Shirindja. Its magical and religious power came from the fact that it was anointed with the "nsila" of the deceased chiefs. On the death of a chief, his "nsila" i. e. the layer of filth resting on his body, was taken away and the mhamba was rubbed with it. This gave the reigning [769] chief the power to influence his ancestor-gods, in accordance with the magic principle : the part influences the whole. It is said that in former times the Khosa chief Shihanyisane having ill-treated his two younger brothers, Malashwane and Shalati, these two men succeeded in taking the chieftainship away from him with the aid of the Ñwamba clan. Eventually Shihanyisane made peace with his brothers and gave over the mhamba to Malashwane : a proof that this mysterious object was in truth considered as the most important attribute of chieftainship.

643 These regalia are not indeed very imposing [illegible]e. Thonga 789 royalty had no brilliant insignia... But it had more than that! 751 Each clan possessed a special medicine whose magical virtues were greatly esteemed ; its possession made the chief invincible, the warriors invulnerable, the country unconquerable. This powerful charm is called *mbhulo* (Dj.), *mphulo* (Ro.).

Amongst the Nkunas, the mbhulo is called *Ñwantikalala*. It is kept by those belonging to the Mushwane house, and a man called Papalati is responsible for it. It consists of four calabashes, two male and two female (medicines are considered as having sex,

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

APPENDIX VI (See p. 265)

The story of Paulus K., illustrating the matlulana superstition and the Thonga horror of polyandry.

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One of my pupils, who was already a married man of, perhaps, thirty-two years of age, once came to me, very much distressed, to confess a fault which seemed to weigh very heavy on his conscience. On a day of feasting he had drunk too freely and had commited adultery with the wife of his elder brother Guga. He fought with himself for years, not daring to avow an action which seemed to him not merely ordinary adultery but an incestuous act. He finally wrote to his brother: "Though I know that we shall not be able to love each other any more as before, though it pains me so much to separate from you, I will confess! Please forgive me, as I intended to commit suicide on account of my fault!"

The special gravity of the fault consisted in two circumstances: 1) She was his brother's wife and he was now unable to visit his brother when ill, to take part in his burial, or to maintain friendly relations with him. 2) Guga was his elder brother. This made the case still worse.

The letter of Paulus to his fellow evangelists is touching: "I have no right to stay in your assembly, because I have been overcome by the Enemy and committed adultery with my elder brother's wife. I have been long prevented (from confessing) by the Enemy's power. Now I have wept before Jesus that He may help me to pierce the abscess... Satan came and said to me: 'Will you not be ashamed to confess such a thing before men?' I nearly retreated. But at sunrise I made haste to write to you, and now I feel peace and joy. It seems to me that I am going to receive the Spirit of God."

APPENDIX VII (See p. 279)

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The story of Spoon Libombo, showing that, when the lobolo has not been paid or has been returned, the children belong to the mother's and not to the father's family.

Spoon was the son of Shibaninge, a woman of the Libombo family, and of Khobete of the Mazwaya family, who had lobola Shibaninge.

611 597 604 This man died during a war with the Portuguese, having been killed on Mbengelen island. The widow was "fambeliwa" (chosen) by Nsiki, Khobete's brother, who was to inherit her. But Nsiki did not really care for the widow. He did not prepare a *ntehe* for the baby nor provide the mother with ochre. Seeing this, Shibaninge went back to her relatives. When the time for the weaning of the little one arrived, a man named Mbobobo had irregular relations with the woman in order to "lumula" the child (See page 60). Mbobobo went so far as to take her to his home, upon which Nsiki claimed the lobolo paid by the Mazwayas and the Libombos gave it back to them. After that, Spoon lived in his mother's family and was called: "wa ka Libombo," "man of Libombo." But he had no real home (a nga na kwakwe). Being on the spot he was always chosen to help in the sacrifices: drinking the beer which remained in the pot after the libations to the gods in the gandelo, near the gate, stealing the offerings when the victims were killed in the sacred bush, etc. He was the "great ntukulu," because his mother belonged to the elder branch or first house of the family. So he took precedence of the other uterine nephews when they had to take part in the sacrifices.

APPENDIX VIII (See p. 281)

The story of Gidhlana Ngwetsa of Rikatla; a typical case illustrating the lobola, divorce, and leper customs of the Ba-Ronga.

587 586 Gidhlana was the sister of a man named Mubene. Both were the children of a fine old Ronga named Ngwetsa and one of his wives. Gidhlana was bought with lobola by a man named Khandlela (candle), son of Nwamanghele, a man of the Manyisa clan settled near Rikatla. The marriage took place probably in 1893. The new pair did not live in peace. Gidhlana quarrelled with her husband. "Why? Nobody knows! Are the affairs of the huts and the villages known to outsiders?" She returned home to her father Ngwetsa. The husband waited a while. Then he followed her (landjela) and asked her to come back to the conjugal home. Her parents told her to obey. She went. But quarrelling soon recommenced. She fled a second time; her husband and her parents-in-law did their best to induce her to go back. She refused. An uncle of hers took a stick and thrashed her but nothing could persuade her.

782 knife, the uterine nephews utter their cries of joy (1). This
769 is their way of consenting (pfumela) or answering, for they accept the offering on behalf of the gods (2). The whole crowd joins in these manifestations of joy.

6) The victim is cut open, and one limb, or small pieces of each limb, are put aside for the gods ; the half digested grass, *psanyi*, found in the intestines, especially in the *shihlakahla* stomach, is carefully put aside.

7) The priest takes a little of the psanyi mixed with the blood of the victim, puts it to his lips, emits a little saliva, and spits out the whole, pronouncing the *tsu*, this being the means of consecrating the offering, or, as we may say, despatching it to the gods.

8) He pronounces the prayer — occasionally interrupted by some member of the family, who has a complaint to make.

9) In certain cases of special misfortune, whilst praying he squeezes the green liquid contained in the psanyi over his hearers, who rub their bodies with it.

10) One of the nephews "cuts his prayer" (i. e. brings it to an end) by taking in his mouth a little of the consecrated beer or wine, or part of the hen's gizzard.

11) The uterine nephews steal the offering and run away, followed by the throng, who throw pellets of psanyi at them. They eat the portion of the gods.

12) Should the offering have been made on behalf of a particular individual, the astragalus of the goat, or some portions of the hen are tied to him and worn for a time on the left or right side of the body : the left if the offering was made to the maternal ancestors, the right if it was made to the paternal gods.

Let us examine more closely some of these acts, so that we may better understand the elements of this ceremony.

(1) Amongst the Ba Nyai they clap their hands and shout : "Ndiyo !" — "all right."

782 (2) It is not necessary to add more about the part played by the uterine nephews in
604 the sacrifice, for it has been explained in detail in Vol. I, p. 269 when treating of the family system. The two great reasons for their taking such a prominent part in the religious ritual seem to be the following : 1) during the life of their maternal uncle, and also of all their mother's family, they were on very intimate terms with them, "even eating from the same piece of food, not fearing their saliva." Therefore they now eat the flesh of the victim instead of the ancestor-gods of their mother. 2) Maternal relatives have a special religious duty towards their nephews. They act as their priests

a) The Priesthood.

The Thongas have no sacerdotal caste, but, as has already been pointed out, the right of officiating in religious ceremonies is strictly confined to *the eldest brother*. All offerings must be made through him. To supplant him is a great taboo, and would entail the malediction of the gods, and even the death of the offender. There are, however, some minor offerings which anyone is allowed to make to his gods ; for instance, a lover who has been jilted, may, after having consulted the bones, give something to his god in order to obtain his aid in regaining the favour of the girl he loves. But, as a rule, no one must *hahla*, or even *gandjela*, before the death of his parents. If, after their death, their son should happen to dream of them, he must offer worship to the deceased by pouring some ground tobacco on to his wooden pillow, this being the commencement of his religious functions : "he begins to learn to gandjela" (Rangane), and, if he is the eldest, he may in course of time become the priest of the whole family. I heard, however, a man from Tembe assert that he had *hahla* when his father was still living, but in this case he had been designated by the bones. A little child may even perform the office if the bones order it ; his father will then hold him in his arms and pray in his stead. The bones often call on *women* to pronounce the prayer, especially the elder sister ; there is no anti-feminism in Thonga religion. In the *luma* ceremony, however, it must always be a man, the chief himself, who is the principal officiant. The wives of the clansmen naturally cannot take a prominent part in the offerings made for the clan, being themselves members of another clan and having their own ancestor-gods, to

(I. p. 268), offerings being frequently made to the gods of the mother's family through the agency of the maternal uncle. Hence the fact that uterine nephews take such a peculiar part in the ritual of the worship.

I must add that according to information just received from the Rev. A. Jaques, in the Northern clans uterine nephews do not steal the portion of the offerings put apart for the ancestor-gods. It seems that this custom, which I believe to be ancient, is met with essentially amongst the Ronga clans, where the special term *mupsyana* (an old Bantu word corresponding to *um-tshana* in Xosa and *mochana* in Sutho) has also been preserved to designate the uterine nephew, whilst it has fallen into disuse in the Northern clans. (Compare I. p. 162, 232, 498.)

3) How are taboos *dealt with?* 784

Happily the danger of taboos can be removed, otherwise life would be almost impossible! The medicine-men have the 789 necessary drugs to protect their poor fellow-men against the misfortune (khombo) which is always threatening them! Is not the whole arsenal of magic at their disposal? Rites in great numbers provide the necessary protection, especially the *luma rite*, which is the proper method of avoiding the special dangers connected with the *first use* of anything. The wish to obtain protection against all these dangers explains the immense influence of the medicine-men, of those who know the preventive drugs to be used against defilement and misfortune.

It is impossible to attain to a true knowledge of the taboos 784 without studying the laws of *their suspension*. Taboos are sometimes suspended. The chief, for instance, is above them, at any rate above some of them, being himself a magical being, a tabooed personage (I. p. 382). The collectivity has a still greater power over them and can cancel them. There are times when all these prohibitions, or at least some of them, are withdrawn; these are the marginal periods, when we behold the strange spectacle that ordinary taboos are suspended (language taboos, relatives-in-law taboos), whilst others are enforced (sexual taboos). I have often drawn attention to this curious phenomenon.

B. MORAL RESTRAINTS.

But taboos are not the only kind of restraint to which primitive 183 Bantus submit themselves. The following statements have been 604 collected from old or young informants who were urged to express their inner feelings on this question :

1) The maternal uncle must provide the ntehe for the first child of his sister. However this is not *yila*, it is a *nau*, a law, and if it is transgressed no direct harm will follow. (I. p. 46.)

2) Men and women do not bathe in the same spot in the lake 183 of Rikatla. Why? Not on account of a yila, but on account of 834